DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 12. 556 RC 009 163

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TITLE Sources of Information for Evaluating Rural Development: An Overview.
INSTITUTION Southern Rural Development Center, State College, Miss.; Texas A and M Univ., College Station. Texas Agricultural Experiment Station.
PUB DATE 76
NOTE 9p.; Paper presented at the Rural Sociology Section of the SAAS Meetings (Mobile, Alabama, 1976)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS Bibliographies; Data Bases; *Evaluation; Guides; *Information Sources; *Information Systems; Library Materials; Reference Materials; *Research; *Rural Development

ABSTRACT

Designed to help rural development evaluators and other social scientists use their bibliographic search time more efficiently, this information guide presents the following: (1) detailed information on computerized information retrieval systems, including name, location, subject matter, turnaround time, cost, availability, and utility (Smithsonian Science Information Exchange--SSIE; Educational Resources Information Center--ERIC; Current Research Information System-CRIS; Cataloging and Indexing System of the National Agricultural Library--CAIN); (2) library sources (the Automated Information Retrieval Service and useful standard library search methods--the card catalogue under "evaluation", "action research", and "programs" and the following journal abstracts, readers' indexes, and journals: Sociological Abstracts; Dissertation Abstracts; Current Index to Journals in Education--CIJE; Development of Society; Evaluation; Human Organization; Journal of the Community; Journal of Extension; Social Issues; Sociological Methods and Research; Social Work; Theory and Practice; Transaction; Welfare in Review); (3) a selected bibliography with two citations for books, journal issues, and newsletters which either deal specifically with rural development evaluative research and/or offer extensive bibliographies. (JC)

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Rec 17-05-76

ED121556

SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR EVALUATING RURAL DEVELOPMENT: AN OVERVIEW*

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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RC009163

*Paper presented at the Rural Sociology Section of the Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists meetings, Mobile, Alabama, 1976. Development of this paper was sponsored by the Southern Rural Development Center (Mississippi State University) and the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station (Texas A&M University) as a contribution to the SRDC project, "A Synthesis of Evaluative Literature on Rural Development in the Southern Region." The contents of this paper are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the SRDC or Texas A&M University. Appreciation is expressed to Sharon K. Hazelton for her assistance in preparing this manuscript. All errors, of course, are the responsibility of the authors.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR EVALUATING RURAL DEVELOPMENT: AN OVERVIEW

This handbook of evaluative research on rural development sources of information is intended as an evaluator's guide to material which we have found to be most helpful for locating evaluative research reports, articles and reference books. Each of the sources included has been utilized in the amassing of evaluative research references in an ongoing Southern Rural Development Center project, "A Synthesis of Evaluative Research Literature for Rural Development in the Southern Region".

Included in this handbook is detailed information about computerized information retrieval systems whose subject matter is relevant to evaluative research; a listing of those sources of library information which are - and which are not - useful for evaluative researchers; and a brief selected bibliography of references for further information.

One of the major objectives of the present project is to increase awareness of the methods and types of evaluative research literature available to program developers and evaluators. We hope this information guide will help evaluators and other social scientists use their bibliographic search time more efficiently by pointing out sources which have the greatest potential for output.

I. COMPUTERIZED INFORMATION RETRIEVAL SYSTEMS

Included in this section are detailed descriptions of four information sharing systems which contain many sources related to the evaluation of rural development. Like most information retrieval systems, these four deal with rather specialized areas of study. For information concerning the hundreds of other computerized information retrieval systems offering searches in nearly as many subject areas, the researcher should see:

Kruzas, A.J. (ed.)
1974 The Encyclopedia of Information Systems and Services, Ann Arbor, Michigan: Anthony J. Kruzas Associates.

A word might be offered at this point concerning which "keywords" and "descriptors" tap the most relevant evaluative literature indexed in these information systems. Listed below are these "keywords": EVALUATION, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, POLICY, PROGRAM, ACTION RESEARCH, PROGRESS.

A. Smithsonian Science Information Exchange (SSIE)

Director: David F. Hersey, Ph.D., President

Address: Smithsonian Science Information Exchange
1730 M. Street, North West, Room 300
Washington, D.C. 20036

Telephone: (202) 381-5511

Subject Matter:

On-going research, sponsored by both federal and non-federal organizations,

in all fields. SSIE answers questions about who is working on what problems, at what location, and with what support. It organizes, tabulates, and summarizes research support and prepares surveys of research in broad areas. SSIE prepares material by contract for publication in response to requests for catalogs of on-going research by various organizations. It carries on a program of issuing periodic information in the form of selective dissemination searches, and it maintains a registry of basic and applied research being undertaken. SSIE covers life, physical and social sciences, including medicine, agriculture, education, community programs, engineering, water resources and other traditional science areas. Coverage is limited to projects at an early stage, prior to research results and publications.

Turnaround Time:

About two weeks.

Cost:

Cost is $50.00 per search which yields up to fifty notices of research projects, $10.00 for each additonal notice of research projects. Presearched packages are available (not customized however) at lower costs.

Availability:

Services are available to all; however, an entire program of a supporting agency may not be released without that agency's permission. Search services may be ordered from the SSIE by letter, telephone, or by cable (Telex 89495).

Utility:

Of the references retrieved, approximately 63% were included as useful sources in the present project's evaluation bibliography.

B. Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

Director: Everett D. Edington

Address: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools
Box 3AP
New Mexico State University
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88003

Telephone: (505) 646-2623

Subject Matter:

The educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) has sixteen different scopes each covering a specific area. The scopes are: ERIC Clearinghouse on Counseling and Personnel Services; ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education; ERIC Clearinghouse on Early Childhood Education; ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management; ERIC Clearinghouse on the Handicapped and Gifted Children; ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education; ERIC Clearinghouse on Information Resources; ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges; ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and

Linguistics; ERIC Clearinghouse for Reading and Communication Skills; ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Science Education; ERIC Clearinghouse on Teacher Education; ERIC Clearinghouse on Tests, Measurements, and Evaluation; and ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools (CRESS). Of these scopes, the most important for this evaluation project is the ERIC/CRESS. ERIC/CRESS acquires, indexes, and abstracts information related to all aspects of American Indian education, education in small schools, Mexican American education, migrant education, outdoor education, and rural education. Research reports, program evaluations,curriculum guides, instructional materials, professional information, and many other kinds of information which would be of value to an educator or educational researcher are gathered, evaluated and made easily accessible through the ERIC indexes; RIE and CIJE.

The Research in Education (RIE) is a monthly journal published by the U.S. Government Printing Office, containing resumes and indexes. Each item is indexed by subject, author, or principle researchers, and sponsoring institution. Complete texts of most documents cited in RIE are available from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS).

The Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE) provides detailed indexing by subject and author for articles appearing in over seven hundred educational and education-related journals. Users should use their local resource centers and libraries to locate the journals cited. The CIJE index is published monthly by Maxmillan Information, Riverside, New Jersey.

Turnaround Time:

The turnaround time is from ten days to two weeks.

Cost:

If the computer search is used the cost varies according to state from $15.00 to $30.00.

Availability:

It is available to anyone wishing to use it. In fact, many resource centers and libraries have the ERIC indexes available and also maintain the complete ERIC microfiche collections which may be utilized by the public. Users can obtain hardcopy printouts of information contained on fiche at cost, depending on the article.

Utility:

Of the references retrieved, approximately 35% were included as useful sources in the present project's evaluation bibliography.

C. Current Research Information System (CRIS)

Director: Mr. John Meyres

Address: Current Research Information System
United States Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250

Telephone: (202) 447-7273

Subject Matter:

CRIS is a centralized, computer-based agricultura esearch information system administered by the USDA-Cooperative State Research Service (CSRS) for the benefit of State Agricultural Experiment Stations of Forestry, Land Grant Colleges of 1890 and Tuskegee Institute. All 53 State Experiment Stations and the USDA furnish forms for all active research projects. Research projects are submitted annually and are entered into the computerized information management system. For each work unit for which information is requested, the following must be specified:

1. Name and address of recipient
2. Date information is needed
3. A statement of informal needs (be as specific as possible, within 100 words)
4. Level of research required

Requests are edited by report analysts at CSRS to assure that proper codes for commodities, activities, research problem areas, and keywords have been used to identify relevant research being conducted in other states. These facilitate rapid retrieval of the information in a form which is useful for the requesting organizations. For each request CRIS will give the name of the principal investigator, performing institution, and department, and will also give a brief description of the project-title, objectives, plan of work, and current progress, including the more important recent publications.

Turnaround time:

Two to four weeks.

Cost and Availability:

This information is available to those affilited with the State Agriculture Experiment Station at no cost by submission of informal retrieval forms to CSRS.

Utility:

Of the references retrieved, approximately 80% were included as useful sources in the present project's evaluation bibliography.

D. Cataloging and Indexing System of the National Agricultural Library (CAIN)

Director: Ronald J. Walton

Address: Cataloging and Indexing System of the National Agricultural Library
National Agricultural Library
United States Department of Agriculture
10301 Baltimore Boulevard
Beltsville, Maryland 20705

Telephone: (301) 344-3750

Subject Matter:

Literature search services have been primarily in the form of current awareness profiles. These profiles have been made available to U.S. Department of Agriculture researchers through the Department's Agricultural Research Service. General public access has been available through the Universities of Florida and Georgia, and a number of other locations around the world.

On-line interactive bibliographic search and retrieval service was put into operation July 1973. This data base consists of 16 magnetic tapes which contain catalog and bibliographic data on all monographs and many journal articles received by the National Agricultural Library. This file contains over 700,000 records.

The subject categories most relevant to the evaluation of rural development programs is 0505 General Agriculture and Rural Sociology, including human ecology, social psychology, social effects, social institutions. Rural organizations and movements, leadership, farmer political power. Health, welfare, etc., affecting family life. Rural-urban relations. Population migration to urban areas. Social aspects of migratory and contract labor, women as laborers, sharecroppers, etc.

Cost and Availability:

Free of charge to employees of the USDA and to on-site users of the NAL's resources. On-line searching may also be used at the discretion of the reference staff in answering queries for information received by mail. Scientists and researchers outside of USDA can get on-line to CAIN through Lockheed Information Systems, Palo Alto, California, or Systems Development Corporation, Santa Monica, California.

II. THE LIBRARY

A. Automated Information Retrieval Service

Most major university libraries also have a computerized literature searching service called the Automated Information Retrieval Service. The AIRS offers a wide range of on-line bibliographic and statistical data bases. All major fields of inquiry are represented in the data bases. Types of materials retrieved by the system range from technical reports and patent information to published articles and project descriptions for current research activities. Information is retrieved through keywords or combinations of such words appearing in titles, in abstracts, or in a list of subject terms. Items can also be recalled by author, by publication name, and/or other categories. Output consists of a list of citations containing the specified combinations of keywords. Full bibliographic information, and in some cases, abstracts are provided. Most searches cost from $15. to $30. dollars. Charges are assessed by the minute according to phone-time and computer-time. This system contains the indexes of such information systems as: CAIN-Cataloging and Indexing System of the National Agricultural Library; ERIC- Educational Resources Information Center; SCISEARCH - Science Citation Index; SOCIAL SCISEARCH - Social Science Citation Index; SSIE - Smithsonian Science Information Exchange; and PSYCHABS - Psychological Abstracts. To initiate a search, contact a university library.

B. For literature searches limited to standard library search methods, the list below outlines those sources which are most efficient in terms of time spent and number of references contained which pertain to evaluative research literature, as well as those which were of little use relative to this subject matter.

1. Journal Abstracts, Readers' Indexes, and Journals.

Useful

(a) Sociological Abstracts: particularly the Rural Sociology Section and abstracts of papers presented at the annual Rural Sociological Society; see 1968, and 1971 to present.

(b) Dissertation Abstracts: in particular see those prior to 1967; once dissertations of relevance are located, however, their authors are often difficult to locate and their manuscripts obtained. See subject areas "Evaluation" and "Project".

(c) Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE): an index of all manuscripts included in ERIC files, as well as manuscript ordering information.

(d) Social Science Citation Index: a listing of titles and authors, by subject area, etc., which have appeared in recent social science journals.

(e) Development of Society
Evaluation
Human Organization
Journal of the Community
Journal of Extension
Social Issues
Sociological Methods & Research
Social Work
Theory and Practice
Transaction
Welfare in Review

Non-useful

(a) Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature

(b) Winchell's Guide to Reference Books

(c) Subject Guide to Books in Print

(d) Monthly Catalogue of U.S. Government Publications

2. Card Catalogue

(a) Is most useful for locating reference books which may have extensive bibliographies; in the subject catalogue see "Evaluation", "Action Research", and "Programs" in particular.

III. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

In this section are selected references which either deal specifically with Rural Development evaluative research and/or offer extensive bibliographies or special journal issues pertaining to this subject area.

A. Books

1. Struening, Elmer and Marcia Guttentag (eds.) Handbook of Evaluation Research, Vol. I & II. Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1975.
2. Carol Weiss (ed.) Evaluating Action Programs: Readings in Social Action and Education. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1972.

B. Special Journal Issues Devoted to Evaluation

1. Sociological Methods & Research. Vol. 4, No. 2, August 1973.
2. Journal of Extension. No. XIII, March-April 1975.

C. Newsletters

1. Evaluation and Rural Development. Department of Rural Sociology, 315 Agriculture Bldg., Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas 77843.
2. CRD (Community Resource Development) Newsletter. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Extension Service, (John S. Bottum, Assistant Administrator, Rural Development, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250).